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U.S.-BASED GROUP OFFERS \$50 MILLION TO PROMOTE NUCLEAR SECURITY

Officials welcome effort to build international nuclear fuel reserve

By David McKeeby
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – A U.S.-based organization is offering the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) \$50 million toward the creation of an international nuclear fuel reserve that would allow countries to reap the benefits of civil nuclear power without having to develop nuclear enrichment capabilities that could pose a weapons proliferation risk.

Former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, co-chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, announced the offer in a September 19 speech during the IAEA's 50th General Conference in Vienna, Austria.

A nongovernmental organization dedicated to reducing the threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, NTI, was founded in 2000 by Nunn and former media executive Ted Turner. The organization is governed by an international board of directors with members from China, France, India, Japan, Jordan, Pakistan, Russia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

From 1972 to 1996, Nunn served as a U.S. senator and, together with Senator Richard Lugar, proposed legislation creating the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program in 1991. It provides as-

sistance to Russia and the former Soviet republics to secure and destroy their excess nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

Nunn explained that under the NTI vision, the nuclear fuel reserve would be maintained by the IAEA as a backup source for countries choosing to develop nuclear power by purchasing fuel from other countries, foregoing the development of nuclear enrichment facilities. Should these countries face disruptions to their fuel supply, the IAEA then would step in to provide the needed nuclear fuel.

“We believe this concept is urgent because many nations are seeking nuclear energy to meet their development needs and are weighing available options to determine what will be the most secure and most economical way to ensure a reliable supply of nuclear fuel,” Nunn said.

The fuel bank can help reassure these developing nations that they will have ready access to fuel if they pursue nuclear energy in accordance with their international treaty obligations.

By reducing the overall number of new enrichment facilities, the international community also better can ensure the safety of nuclear materials and technologies, thereby preventing their possible misdirection into weapons.

American businessman and philanthropist Warren Buffett contributed to the fund, calling it an “investment in a safer world.”

However, Nunn said that NTI’s contribution has two conditions that must be met within two years: first, the IAEA must take the necessary actions to approve establishment of the nuclear fuel reserve; and, second, IAEA member nations must contribute an additional \$100 million or provide an equivalent value of fuel-grade uranium to help establish the reserve.

“We must find new and better answers to the imperative of the nuclear age,” Nunn said. “We believe these dangers are urgent and that is why we at NTI are stepping forward. It is now up to governments to act and to act decisively.”

The State Department’s press office says that the United States welcomes and supports the NTI initiative to establish an IAEA fuel reserve. A similar concept was presented to IAEA earlier this year by the United States, together with France, Russia, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman addressed the IAEA conference September 19, saying an international mechanism to assure an adequate supply of reactor fuel is critical both to meeting the world’s energy needs and to advancing nonproliferation goals.

MIDEAST QUARTET ENDORSES PALESTINIAN LEADER’S EFFORTS

Rice says Palestinian government must be committed to peace

By Judy Aita
Washington File United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- The Quartet for Middle East peace September 20 endorsed the efforts of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to form a government of national unity and recognized the need to continue humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people.

The Quartet -- the United Nations, the European Union (EU), Russia and the United States -- “discussed and indeed welcomed the efforts of [Mahmoud Abbas] to deal with the difficult circumstances in the Palestinian Territories,” Secre-

tary of State Condoleezza Rice said after the meeting. “We noted again the importance of the formation of a Palestinian government that would be devoted to and respectful of the principles of the Quartet.”

“[Y]ou cannot have peace if you do not recognize the right of the other partner to exist and that the renunciation of violence is a key to negotiations,” Rice said. “If indeed there is going to be a government that is able to govern, it needs the support of the international community and it needs to be committed to peace.”

After a three-hour meeting, representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, EU Representative Javier Solana and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- issued an official statement reaffirming its “commitment to the road map as the means to realize the goal of two democratic states -- Israel and Palestine -- living side by side in peace and security.”

“The Quartet welcomed the efforts of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to form a government of national unity, in the hope that the platform of such a government would reflect Quartet principles and allow for early engagement,” the group said in an official statement issued after the meeting on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

The Quartet called for a three-month extension and the expansion of the “temporary international mechanism” created in June to channel aid to the Palestinians without going through the Hamas-led government. It also encouraged greater donor support to meet the needs of the Palestinian people, especially on security-sector reform, reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and economic development.

The Quartet also endorsed Annan’s initiative to have James Wolfensohn, former World Bank president, report on the economic and humanitarian situation.

It has been difficult for the Hamas-led Palestinian government to deliver on its promises for a better life for the Palestinian people, Rice said.

“The Palestinians need a government that is committed to the decadelong effort between Palestinians and Israelis to find a route to peace, to commitments that have been taken on behalf of the Palestinian people, and quite simply, to a set of agreements that the international community indeed supports,” she said. “Until there is such, it’s going to be very difficult for that government to function.”

The statement is an indication of the strengthening of the common position among the members of the Quartet, a senior State Department official said. There is a realization collectively that the Hamas government is failing to meet its duties as a government and not subscribing to the principles of the Quartet. Those principles, reiterated in the communiqué, include the recognition of Israel’s right to exist, the renunciation of violence and acceptance of all existing agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, called the communiqué “a forthright statement of the criteria for any Palestinian government.”

The official said the Hamas government has failed as yet to meet the standards set forth by the Quartet and shows no inclination to accept them.

The Quartet also encouraged Israel to consider transferring impounded Palestinian tax and customs revenue through the temporary international mechanism set up to improve the economic and humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel, which collects taxes and customs duties on goods destined for the Palestinian Territories, halted transfer of those tax revenues to the Palestinian government after Hamas took control earlier in 2006.

U.S. RESEARCHER URGES MEASURABLE INFORMATION WAR ON EXTREMISM

Marshall Center speaker discusses Cold War-style information strategies

By Vince Crawley
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- A U.S. government analyst proposes using Cold War-style information and containment strategies to prevent the spread of Islamic extremism, and recommends immediate action to start gathering data on public diplomacy efforts in Muslim communities worldwide.

The world is at "a major crossroads in history," said Raphael Perl, a specialist in international affairs for the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service (CRS), which provides analytical reports for the U.S. Congress.

"The effectiveness of our efforts in combating extremist ideologies may, to a large extent, shape the future political and economic landscape of the world," Perl said in a September 15 conference at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirche, Germany.

"If we fail to confront and contain the threat" of extremist ideologies, "a new intolerant, radical, violence-prone political order may become the democratically elected norm in many important countries," Perl warned. The theme of the Marshall Center conference was Countering Ideological Support for Terrorism. Perl stressed that some of his views included statements of personal opinion and independence research that do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the U.S. government.

The Bush administration has set forth the concept of "pre-emptive strikes against terrorism," Perl said. He added, "We need pre-emptive strikes in an ideological sense as well."

He recommended an immediate program to start identifying public diplomacy programs and developing meaningful ways to measure their effect, resources and personnel.

Examples of measurable resources and progress include:

- The number of U.S. government employees overseas who are fully fluent in the languages of their host countries. "When I say fluent," Perl said, "I mean as fluent in that foreign language as Adel Al Jubair, the Saudi political adviser, is in English -- fluent enough to present or debate points of view on television against charismatic ideological adversaries."
- The numbers and grades of U.S. officials in the field whose specific duties include ideological countermeasures.
- The funding and staff levels of public diplomacy missions.
- The number of radio and television stations "which broadcast our message of freedom and tolerance, or which jam the broadcasts of extremist stations," Perl said.
- The number and intensity of extremist statements in a representative sample of mass media and in sermons at selected mosques. "If we don't have enough staffing even to make these measurements due to existing workload," Perl said, "that is a clear indication at the outset of a resource shortage."

In addition to measurable numbers, he called for ensuring that those who deal with foreign publics have been trained to counter extremist messages.

"Have our field officers studied the doctrine of Islamist extremism to the same extent that such officers previously studied communist ideology during the Cold War?" Perl asked. "Can officers debate extremist views by quoting the Quran

as easily as they quote sound bites from the press guidance?” For example, Perl said, U.S. officials could debate whether terrorist leaders have adhered to the Quran’s Sura 4, Verse 92, which discusses the payment of compensation when innocent Muslims mistakenly are killed.

“To be successful at public diplomacy, we need to offer a ‘competitive product,’” Perl said. During the Cold War, “the West was united in opposition to totalitarian oppression” and “some people were willing to risk their lives to get to the West not just for the economic opportunity but for freedom.” However, he said, the cultural circumstances are quite different in the struggle against extremism.

The adherents of Islamist extremism “abhor rather than admire Western culture and morals,” he said. “A critical component of any strategy is to encourage debate within the ranks of Islam and within intellectual communities in Islamic populations over the wisdom or ‘correctness’ of radical extremist ideologies which claim their basis in religion.”

Perl also said “academic discussions concerning the nature of programs and measurements [of public diplomacy efforts] have gone on too long already. There is no further benefit to further delay and, indeed, every reason to forge ahead as soon as possible. We can and should begin collecting data immediately.”

U.S., EUROPE WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT DRUG TRAFFICKING

U.S. drug enforcement official outlines cooperation in addressing global threat

Washington -- Illicit drugs are a global menace, and the United States and Europe are working together to curb the increased flow of these drugs from South America to Europe, says Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Chief of Operations Michael Braun.

In September 21 testimony before two House subcommittees, Braun said that since the early 1990s, Europe has experienced a significant increase in the amount of cocaine trafficked from South America. DEA investigations have shown that the same Colombian organizations that are smuggling cocaine to Europe are also smuggling to the United States, so it is “vitally important” that the United States and Europe coordinate their counternarcotics efforts, he added.

To this end, Braun said, the DEA has forged a strong and cooperative relationship with its European counterparts, maintaining offices in 11 European countries with approximately 60 DEA employees. As an example of this cooperation, Braun pointed to Operation Twin Ocean, a three-year effort. And as part of this effort, he said, the DEA worked with law enforcement agencies in Colombia, Panama, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Spain and Great Britain to arrest more than 100 individuals, and seize more than 47 tons of cocaine and nearly \$70 million in assets in May.

Braun explained that the DEA has a particularly close relationship with the United Kingdom’s Serious Organized Crime Agency (SOCA), with numerous ongoing joint operations as well as the recent completion of Operation White Dollar. As part of this operation, the DEA and SOCA worked with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as well as Colombian and Canadian officials to dismantle an international money-laundering ring that laundered millions of Colombian drug dollars in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. The operation resulted in 34 arrests and the forfeiture of \$20 million in laundered funds, Braun said.

The DEA is also active in other parts of Europe, Braun said. He pointed out that the DEA has two special agents with the Royal Dutch National Police National Crime Squad in the Netherlands, and said the DEA and Spanish law enforcement also continuously are working on joint investigations into cocaine smuggling.

These and other DEA's collaborative efforts with its European counterparts will continue as part of the Bush administration's strategy to address the global menace of illicit drugs, Braun said.

"We recognize that interagency and multinational cooperation are essential elements of the president's National Drug Control Strategy, and these cooperative efforts are the best way for us to dismantle and disrupt international drug-trafficking organizations," he said. "DEA will continue to work tirelessly to enhance the effectiveness of our enforcement operations in order to curtail the flow of drugs to both the United States and Europe."

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